

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

TRSE-00 /056 W

-----051107Z 077428 /22

R 051026Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6865

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MANILA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 0052

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SN

SUBJ: GOS MOVES AGAINST FEER CORRESPONDENT

1. SINGAPORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS ON JANUARY 5 REPORTED ARREST ON PREVIOUS DAY OF FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW'S (FEER) SINGAPORE CORRESPONDENT HO KWON PING. HO WAS RELEASED ON BAIL LATE JANUARY 4 AND TODAY (JANUARY 5) WAS CHARGED IN COURT UNDER THE "ESSENTIAL CONTROL OF PUBLIC AND SAFEGUARDING OF INFORMATION REGULATIONS 1966" FOR DISSEMINATION OF PROTECTED INFORMATION WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF A COMPETENT AUTHORITY.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE ARTICLE -- "WASHINGTON AIDS ASEAN BUILD-UP" -- WHICH GAVE OFFENSE TO THE GOS APPEARED IN THE JULY 23, 1976 ISSUE OF FEER. SPECIFIC LANGUAGE TO WHICH THE GOS TOOK EXCEPTION WAS: "SINGAPORE'S CHARTERED INDUSTRIES, MANUFACTURER OF M-16S, IS ALSO EXPORTING SHIPMENTS OF THE SEMI-AUTOMATIC WEAPONS TO ITS NEIGHBORS. SINGAPORE'S OWN CASH PURCHASES WERE NOT EXPLAINED BUT THE GOVERNMENT RECENTLY PURCHASED TWO OLD MINESWEEPERS AND SIX LANDING CRAFT FROM THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNITED STATES..."

3. NEW NATION REPORTED THAT THE CASE WILL "COME UP FOR MENTION" ON JANUARY 12. IN THE MEANTIME, HO IS FREE ON \$5,000 BAIL. IF CONVICTED, HE REPORTEDLY COULD BE SENTENCED TO A MAXIMUM THREE YEAR JAIL TERM, A \$10,000 FINE, OR BOTH.

4. COMMENT: IF GOS CHARGE AGAINST HO IS TAKEN AT FACE VALUE, IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER OBJECTION IS TO REFERENCE TO M-16S, TO PURCHASE OF NAVAL CRAFT FROM U.S., OR TO BOTH. HOWEVER, THE DELAYED REACTION OF GOS TO AN ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED ALMOST HALF A YEAR AGO LEAVES GOS MOTIVES IN DOUBT. IN FACT, IT MAY BE THAT THERE WAS UNHAPPINESS WITHIN THE GOS WITH A NUMBER OF HO'S RECENT ARTICLES IN THE FEER WHICH TENDED TO INFLATE UNVERIFIED RUMORS AND REFLECTED A CRITICAL TONE OF THE GOVERNMENT. IF SO, THEN GOS MAY JUST BE USING A TECHNICAL INFRACTION BY HO OF LOCAL LAWS, CAREFULLY SAVED FOR APPROPRIATE OCCASION, TO NAIL HIM FOR SUBSEQUENT ARTICLES. GRANT

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ARRESTS, JOURNALISTS, INFORMATION CONTROL  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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